

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ABF-01 SY-05 SCSE-00 SCA-01 /018 W

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P 222015Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4480

UNCLAS SANTIAGO 5766

FOR FIMBRES, ARA/BC

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, CI

SUBJECT: GAO REPORT ON PROTECTION

REF: ARA/BC ROUTING SLIP DATED AUGUST 6, 1975

1. FOLLOWING ARE REQUESTED EMBASSY COMMENTS FOR ANNEX TO  
SUBJECT REPORT:

2. WE BELIEVE THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE  
REPORT ARE GENERALLY REASONABLE AND CONSTRUCTIVE AND, IF  
IMPLEMENTED, SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO FOREIGN SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS  
IN RENDERING PROTECTION TO AMERICAN CITIZENS DURING CRISES  
AND EMERGENCIES, INCLUDING THOSE SIMILAR TO THE VIOLENT  
CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT HERE IN SEPTEMBER 1973.

3. NEARLY TWO YEARS AFTER THE EVENT, AND WITH ALL BUT ONE  
OF THE CONSULAR OFFICERS INVOLVED HAVING DEPARTED POST - SOME  
IN THE PERIOD SINCE THE VISIT OF THE GAO TEAM - IT IS DIFFICULT,  
EVEN FOR US, TO RECONSTRUCT THE DETAILS OF PROTECTION EFFORTS  
AT THIS POST FOLLOWING THE MILITARY COUP OF SEPTEMBER 1973.  
IT IS PROBABLY AT LEAST EQUALLY DIFFICULT FOR OTHERS TO  
ASSESS, FAIRLY, HOW WELL PROTECTION RESPONSIBILITIES WERE  
PERFORMED AT THAT TIME.

4. AS IS BOTH INEVITABLE AND PROPER IN A REPORT LOOKING TO  
THE IMPROVEMENT OF FOREIGN SERVICE ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION  
TO AMERICAN CITIZENS, THE REPORT DEALS MAINLY, INsofar AS  
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THIS POST IS CONCERNED, WITH PERCEIVED DEFICIENCIES. NATURALLY,

THERE ARE DIFFERENCES OF APPRECIATION, INTERPRETATION, AND EVEN FACTUAL KNOWLEDGE BETWEEN THOSE WHO WERE PARTICIPANTS IN THE EVENTS UNDER DISCUSSION AND THOSE WHO TRIED TO RECONSTRUCT AND ASSESS THEM LATER. ADDITIONALLY, IN THE INTEREST OF PROPORTION AND BALANCE, IT IS USEFUL TO RECALL THAT ALL EVIDENCE INDICATES THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF AMERICAN CITIZENS IN CHILE AT THE TIME CONSIDERED THEMSELVES WELL AND EFFECTIVELY SERVED BY THEIR EMBASSY DURING THIS PERIOD.

5. IN THE DAYS AND WEEKS FOLLOWING SEPTEMBER 11, 1973, IN ADDITION TO PERFORMING A HEAVY BURDEN OF OTHER ESSENTIAL OFFICIAL FUNCTIONS, EMBASSY PERSONNEL WERE ACTIVE IN PROTECTION EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF THE ENTIRE AMERICAN CITIZEN COMMUNITY NUMBERING SOMEWHERE BETWEEN 2200 AND 2800 PERSONS. IN THE PROCESS, EMBASSY PERSONNEL CHECKED ON THE WELFARE OF OVER 600 AMERICAN CITIZENS AND REPORTED TO RELATIVES OR FRIENDS IN THE UNITED STATES. THEY WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN SECURING THE RELEASE OF 17 AMERICAN CITIZENS DETAINED BY CHILEAN AUTHORITIES AND OBTAINED SAFE CONDUCT PASSES AND HELPED ARRANGE TRANSPORTATION FOR OVER 40 AMERICAN CITIZENS WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO LEAVE CHILE OTHERWISE. THIS WAS ACCOMPLISHED IN THE MIDST OF STREET VIOLENCE AND CHILEAN ADMINISTRATIVE DISORGANIZATION AND WITH EFFORTS IMPEDED BY THE LACK OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE NEW GOVERNMENT, DIFFICULTIES IN COMMUNICATION, A STRICT CURFEW, AND SEVERE MILITARY RESTRICTIONS ON PERSONNEL MOVEMENT AND ACTIVITY. OF THE HUNDREDS OF AMERICANS ASSISTED BY THE EMBASSY DURING THIS PERIOD, THE GREAT MAJORITY EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR EMBASSY EFFORTS AT THE TIME AND A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER TOOK THE TROUBLE TO COMMUNICATE THEIR GRATITUDE TO THE EMBASSY SUBSEQUENTLY.

6. RECOGNIZING HUMAN LIMITATIONS, NO ONE WOULD CONTEND THAT ALL ERRORS WERE AVOIDED, BUT IT IS OUR JUDGMENT, AND WE BELIEVE IT IS THAT OF THE VAST MAJORITY OF AMERICAN CITIZENS IN CHILE AT THE TIME, THAT EMBASSY PERSONNEL DID THEIR VERY BEST TO RENDER PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE HERE AND WERE EFFECTIVE IN DOING SO.

7. FINALLY, IT IS OUR VIEW THAT VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE PROTECTION PROBLEMS DEALT WITH IN THE REPORT WOULD HAVE BEEN UNCLASSIFIED

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GREATLY AMELIORATED, IF NOT ELIMINATED, HAD THE CONSULAR SECTION OF THE EMBASSY BEEN PHYSICALLY AS WELL AS ADMINISTRATIVELY A PART OF THE EMBASSY RATHER THAN LOCATED MORE THAN A MILE AWAY. THE EMBASSY HAS REPEATEDLY RECOMMENDED, BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER SEPTEMBER 1973, THAT A NEW CHANCERY BE CONSTRUCTED AT THIS POST. THIS WOULD PERMIT THE COLLOCATION OF THE CONSULAR SECTION WITH THE REST OF THE EMBASSY.  
POPPER

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